

# Banzai!!

## The Newsletter of the Austin ASL Club

Issue #2.2

March 1997

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### Club Notes and Ladder Standings

Player	Points	Record
Seningen	1274	15-8
Shostak	1256	27-8
Smith	1225	22-9
Kirk Woller	1110	13-19
Hailey	1101	9-6
Lavan	1059	3-3
Esparza	1049	3-1
Purnell	1045	9-5
Phelps	1038	1-0
Tom Woller	1037	1-0
Hively	1011	8-16
O'Quin	1000	4-6
Morgenthaler	978	0-1
Swantek	971	1-2
Bonham	966	0-1
Fritz	963	2-3
Knatcher	924	0-3
Lester	907	0-4
Toreki	906	0-5
Austin	905	0-3
Milder	887	0-5
Gerstenberg	884	6-16

#### Recent Results

Shostak (Germ) def Toreki (Russ) in To the Square  
 Seningen (Germ) def Milder (Brit) in Test of Nerves  
 Shostak (Germ) def Milder (Russ) in At the Point  
 Seningen (Amer) def Gerstenberg (Germ) in L'Abbaye Blanche  
 Lavan (???) def Hailey (???) in KGPII CG  
 Hailey (Brit) def Shostak (Germ) in Another Tricky Day  
 Smith (Germ) def Hively (Amer) in Baraque de Fraiture  
 Hively (Germ) def Smith (Brit) in Another Tricky Day  
 Hively (Russ) def Smith (Germ) in Tiger at the Gates  
 K Woller (Germ) def Bonham (Russ) in The Commissar's House  
 Hively (Amer) def Seningen (Jap) in Seizing Viru Harbor  
 Smith (Russ) def Hailey (Germ) in Trap at Targul Frumos  
 K Woller (Amer) def Shostak (Germ) in The Hornet of Cloville  
 Gerstenberg (Germ) def Milder (Brit) in Slaughter in Heaven  
 K Woller (Russ) def Milder (Germ) in The Guards Counterattack  
 Shostak (Germ) def Toreki (Amer) in A Breezeless Day

If you'd like information about our club, please call Matt at 280-8414 or Mike at 288-3778.

### HIP Tactics

Chas Smith

The use of Combat Security Observation Posts (CSOP) is a modern tactic used by Russian influenced armies. The primary mission of a CSOP is to observe and report enemy movement. Then they allow the enemy to pass and attack by fire into their flanks and rear. The attackers are most vulnerable at this time as they are focused to their front and concentrating on the attack. The CSOP can inflict many losses very quickly.

The composition of a CSOP may vary depending on a unit's equipment, but typically consists of tanks, BMPs, or dismounts with an anti-tank weapon. In some armies (Iraq) it may consist of a 100mm AT Gun, the same one you received in Beyond Valor. The CSOP is usually a platoon size element dependent on past losses and a mix of the equipment mentioned.

The principles of a CSOP can be used and translated into ASL tactics. The main requirement to have an effective CSOP is the ability to HIP units. An AT Gun combined with a LATW-carrying half squad is most common. A tank works just as well if allowed HIP by SSR. The idea is to set up your units to allow for an unsuspecting side or rear shot as your opponent's AFVs pass you. This greatly enhances your chance of a kill and forces your opponent to concentrate on neutralizing the threat instead of the victory conditions.

The first scenario I'll discuss is Valhalla Bound (A74). In the scenario the Germans are allowed to HIP a 75L armored car and 2 squad equivalents. The recommended forces to use as a CSOP are the armored car and a HS with a PSK. The armored car should set up in a woods hex somewhere in the vicinity of 17V9 facing west. The Russians do not have time to wait and search every location. The Russians need to move quickly to get in position due to the entry of the Panthers. The Russian tanks moving on this board are also channeled into the AC's covered arc by the woods and pond. You will get at least 1 rear shot in Defensive Fire and possibly another in your next Prep Fire. If the Russian tanks turn to face the threat, they may expose themselves to the Panthers and are distracted from achieving the victory conditions. This tactic should lead to the destruction of at least 1 enemy vehicle. Additionally, if no Russian tanks enter this board, the AC can safely move to EE6 (or in the vicinity) and take up a hull-down position and possibly get some side shots.

The HS has many options, but should set up on board 4. A good spot is 4Z3 as there is some open terrain for the Russian infantry to cross to get there. This position allows the PSK to fire on any tanks trying to get hull down behind the Z2-Y2 wall and the open ground out to Z7. Another good location is the V1-V2 wooded area. This is a likely route and a choke point for the Russian armor. The down side is that the position could be compromised before getting a shot. Other possibilities include using another HS HIP with a PSK and taking up a position on board 4 to double up the coverage.

The next scenario to be discussed is The Awakening of Spring (BB12). This is a common situation where as the Russians you have 2 AT Guns. One is powerful enough to take on frontal armor while the other must rely on side shots. The 100L should be the strength of the entire defense and should set up to cover as much frontage as possible and engage tanks in the front. The 85L should be used in a CSOP position. A good location for it is the B4 wooded area. From here it can get some good side shots at tanks and also provide some devastating HE fire on any infantry moving in the open.

The 85L location at first may appear obvious and therefore not a good location. The German infantry will most certainly attempt to clear this area and should eventually neutralize the gun. The setup of one squad between the gun and the Germans will slow down any advance. A machinegun may be placed in 16O2. From there he could place a fire lane to 16A2 and deter a rapid advance or inflict casualties to one. The German tanks may wait to move until that area is cleared. If so, the attack will have little momentum and the Russian reinforcements will have plenty of time to maneuver to advantageous positions. If the German armor advances without clearing the area the 85L can take some good shots.

In summary, CSOP tactics can be used in ASL. By placing tank killers in good locations and tying in with the main defense you will create effective kill zones. These tactics will break up attacks and slow momentum. The

attacker will lose focus on the victory conditions as he must deal with this new threat.

## After Action Report: The Hornet of Cloville

**Matt Shostak**

Recently I had the opportunity to square off against Kirk Woller in a scenario from the new Schwerepunkt Pack, called *The Hornet of Cloville*. It's a very short, tight scenario, taking place on half of board 42. A small force of 548s, backed up by a PzIV and a Nashorn, try to hold the crossroads area against a group of 9 American first line squads supported by three Shermans. To win, the Americans must clear the crossroads area of good order Germans and vehicles. The German setup is restricted to a small radius around the crossroads, while the Americans can enter anywhere along two sides of the board.

I was puzzled about how to craft a clever German setup given the restrictions, although an SSR allows the Nashorn to set up in a building, which it normally couldn't do because it is open topped. I decided to throw Kirk a curve and put the PzIV in building J3, facing the bocage on that side of the board. I was hoping he would think it was the Nashorn and therefore avoid that area. I put the Nashorn in the I4 rubble facing the other direction. With it went my 8-1, MMG, 548. I put a couple of units in J5 and K5, while a squad with an LMG went in F3, hoping to catch unwary Americans in A6 with a shot through the gap in the wall. A squad with a panzerschreck went in G5, while a half squad in H8 rounded out the defense.

Kirk's attack was three-pronged. He had two Shermans and a few squads enter in the southwest area and move up to the bocage. An 8-1 and 3 squads with a MMG entered along the woods path and hoofed it all the way to K8, where their concealment was stripped. They then advanced into the wooden building in J7. The last prong involved one Sherman and a few squads led by the 9-1 entering on A10 and working their way around the flank. My PzIV opened up on the Sherman in M2, missing him but gaining acquisition. In the German half of the turn, the PzIV fired again but missed due to the hull down status of the Sherman. The MMG group in the I4 rubble shot at the American group in I7 with an 8+1, which broke all three squads although the leader passed. This was a stroke of good fortune but it also illustrates why stacking can be a bad thing. In this case, unsupported by other units, these men were doomed. The Germans were easily able to surround them in the Movement Phase. I invoked No Quarter during the rout phase, and the 8-1 perished in CC from a 7:1 attack. At this point I thought I should win the scenario. Kirk had just lost a third of his infantry, and one half of his leadership. However, in roughly the same time frame one of his Shermans got a little help from Lady Luck as well, roasting the PzIV with a critical hit.

With the PzIV gone, that flank was cracked open and Kirk pushed his American squads into J3 to threaten the German MMG team in the I4 rubble (and the Nashorn as well). The fighting in the F3-F5 area started to go the Americans' way as a couple of decent shots at a squad in F5 failed to affect it. The panzerschreck squad was soon eliminated, and the LMG squad in F3 eventually retreated back to the G3 brush to avoid the -2 acquisition that the Sherman had on it. The German 7-0 was nearby in G2 for support. Kirk soon moved the Sherman from N3 to J4 to threaten the Nashorn that was adjacent in the I4 rubble but still concealed. The German infantry in the area tried for panzerfausts and street fighting, to no avail, although later a street fighting attack would immobilize this Sherman in that location. I decided against trying to shoot at the Sherman with the Nashorn because I wanted to survive the Advancing Fire shot, and get him in my turn. That failed, and the Sherman waxed him. Having utterly lost the tank battle, it was getting grim for the infantry. Ultimately it came down to the 7-0, LMG, 548 in G2, and a half squad in J5, on the last turn. Kirk ran a squad into H1, where it broke from a 16+0. Next he ran a guy into H2, where it also broke. But he still had the 9-1 and 666 in F3, ready to move into F2 and advance into CC. Holding my guys in melee would be good

enough for the victory conditions. He moved the squad in first. Knowing that my chance of ambushing him were slim, as were my chances of winning the CC outright, I decided to use Final Protective Fire. Heck, I had an 8 morale unit, and the 8-1 had a good chance to break the 666. I rolled a 9. Ouch. That accomplished, Kirk easily dispatched the half squad in J5 in Close Combat, in what was really an anticlimax to the scenario.

I don't think either of us played a perfect game. The loss of the platoon on turn 1 could have easily cost Kirk the victory, and I'm a bit embarrassed to admit that I couldn't forge one after receiving such a generous gift early. But to Kirk's credit the one crucial mistake he *did not* make was throwing in the towel after that. Many players would have, and I know I would have been sorely tempted if I were in his shoes. He stuck it out and got the win, which must be especially gratifying to come from behind. On my part I think the placement of my vehicles was my worst (but by no means only) mistake. They could not support each other, sitting as it were essentially back-to-back, and therefore could be eliminated one by one. In addition, the PzIV was not enough by itself to cover the orchard area on that flank. Then again, it's hard to find enough units to go around. I might have been better served to center my defense around the F3 area, rather than the I4 rubble area. This was a fun scenario, easily completed in a short time.

## Another Look at The Commissar's House

**Dade Cariaga**

Let me state right off that *The Commissar's House* (ASL4) is my absolute favorite ASL scenario. My affinity for this scenario is probably as much due to my own success when playing it (I'm currently 6-0, but this will be put to the test at the next Berserk Commissar's meeting) as to its actual merits as a tactical situation. Nonetheless, this scenario has all the steak-and-potatoes trappings that ASL players everywhere enjoy: excellent troops, leadership, and support weapons pitted against each other in a gnarly street fight that represents a microcosm of the battle that arguably decided the war. Regarding balance, I've heard respected ASL players at various times claim that each side is favored. For my part, I'd say that the scenario might be slightly pro-Russian, but only by a hair's breadth. Certainly not by enough to warrant the Russian player giving up the balance condition.

On to specifics. Let's start with the Russian defense. Right up front, I should state that my own ideas for this defense originated in an article published in the amateur zine **On All Fronts**. Unfortunately, I can't recall the name of the author, but I want to credit this magazine and the contributing author insofar as I am able. My first few playings of *The Commissar's House* saw me referring to the article in question as Gospel and its suggestions are still the basis for the overall defense. However, that author relied heavily on the "kill stack" mentality of loading up the big Russian machineguns in stacks and I have since divorced myself from this tactic. At least, for the most part.

I like to anchor the Russian left with my 628 squads. I spread them out in building 20CC7, no more than one squad per location, all concealed, and with one or two dummy stacks as well. This area is close, so the 2 hex range of these troops will not be a detriment, and they can dish out considerable firepower to Germans trying to cross the Z6-DD8 street. I put a single 8-0 leader back in CC5 to rally these units as they are broken by the inexorable Pioneer assault. By turn 3, or at the latest, turn 4, survivors will attempt to get back across the street to building Z4. Also, this is not a bad area to use one of the 3 HIP squads. Place a 628 hidden in, say CC7, level 1, and wait for a juicy -2 shot against any Germans that cross the street after all your non-hidden units have abandoned the building. Lastly, I put an 8-1 leader, 447, and LMG in hex X5 (perhaps hidden) to lay down a firelane across the street. Be sure at least one 628 sets up in back, in DD5 or DD6 to discourage a German flanking maneuver. But keep all your men on the same side of the street as the leader: if they're stuck on the far side, chances are they won't come back.

On the Russian right, I put a single 447 (concealed) in the S6 victory building. I believe it's futile to try to defend this building, but the Germans should at least have to spend time rooting out its one occupant. Another 447 with LMG goes in T3 for the fire lane opportunity down the T hexrow. I put the 6 trenches in hexes U6, U7, V4 through V6, and W6. The remaining 447s and an 8-0 leader are spread out in these trenches and the surrounding buildings. Their objective is to stubbornly hinder the German advance from the S6 building to the Z4 building. These guys are here to fight to the last. If a few can use the sewer in W5 to get back to the Commissar's House it's a bonus. But for the most part, they will die in their trenches. Hopefully, exacting a toll on the Germans in the process. Another location in this area that is seemingly quite valuable is X6. However, as this position is so obviously important, I start a dummy stack there, hoping to draw German fire. Later, the leader, squad, and LMG in X5 can move there if the situation warrants it.

The 458s, big machineguns, 9-1 and 8-1 leaders go in building Z4 itself. I put the 9-1, 458, and HMG in the second level of Z4. This location commands a view of all likely German approaches. Be ready to hammer hex X8 though, because the German player will want that hex. It's just outside the normal range of the Russian squads, while still within the range of the German first-liners. An MMG, squad, and 8-1 leader go in Z4, at the ground level as well. The other MMG, I put in Z3 or AA4, shifting between the two locations to meet whatever is deemed the greatest threat. I think these machineguns really need to go in building Z4. They're too heavy to move effectively (5PP), and if they're placed away from the building, they could well end up in German hands.

By turn 5 or 6, it's best to get any and all of your surviving troops back to the Commissar's house. The stairwell defense (stubbornly holding to the two stairwell locations) will make German progress very slow as he tries to root you out of each and every fortified location. Beware of demo packs, however. A demo pack placed in a ground level location will possibly rubble the entire hex on an original 5 or less (wood) or 4 or less (stone) resolution DR (B24.11). If the upper level locations are loaded with squads, this can be a nasty way to lose a lot of men. Blast the DC placement squads. They're even more of a threat than the flamethrowers.

As the German player, your plan of attack is largely dependent on the Russian setup. But, generally, I like to load all the Pioneers on the German right to annihilate Russian resistance in this area quickly. The 467s get the dirty work of capturing building S6 and putting pressure on the Russian right. It doesn't have to be much, just keep some Russians tied down. The 467s on the left should secure the X6 building and advance as they have opportunity, but the real burden is placed on the 838 pioneers.

Also, as I mentioned before, 20X8 is a nice place to put the 10-2, with a machinegun kill-stack of 467s to hammer away at the Russians in Z4 and AA4. If Captain Muench can break the units in those hexes, move your DCs up and blow them. Also, save your flamethrowers for the assault on the victory building. Don't squander them on the advance. Consider giving these weapons to the 8-0 leaders in your OB. These guys can fire the things without penalty, and they're lightning rods for Russian bullets, which takes some heat off of your Pioneers. The main thrust of the Pioneer assault should be through the BB6 and BB5 buildings. A small flanking group, moving up the extreme German right to assault the victory building from BB2 and BB3 can be a huge help. In order to enhance this effort, you have to be sure to neutralize hex X6. Try to coordinate these two advances such that the assault (which should begin on turn 6) can come from both directions at once. If one group gets to its jumping off point ahead of the other, use the time to Prep fire and break down the Russian defense. Don't attack piecemeal. If you do the Russian will pick you apart.

In my experience, this one usually comes down to a nasty, tense fight for the Commissar's House. There will be large counter stacks in each hex of that building (one of the less attractive features of the scenario) and each roll becomes agonizing. Like I said before, I love the scenario. I'm sure you will, too.

*(With regard to the large stacks in the Z4 building, it may prove useful to draw a diagram of it with enlarged hexes, and keep it off to the side,*

*stacking the units there instead. This may help avoid constantly knocking the stacks over. The downside is that it may be a bit distracting not having the actual pieces on the board itself. But if both players are agreeable, try it. - ed.)*

## Scenario Analysis: Fighting Withdrawal

**Matt Shostak**

Last issue's analysis of *The Commissar's House* was intended to take a look back at a fun scenario that might be of interest to beginning players, and accessible because of its inclusion in the very first module, *Beyond Valor*. With the avalanche of new ASL products in the market it is easy to overlook these older gems. In the same spirit, I would like to take a look at the very first scenario, *Fighting Withdrawal*.

**Attraction:** Basic infantry street fight, with the chance to use the Finns with their special capabilities, in a scenario featuring one of the most difficult military maneuvers, from which the scenario gets its name. The scenario is well balanced and well tested (Russian 108, Finn 84 according to the Internet record as of this writing). No matter which side I play in this scenario, I always feel that it is quite a challenge.

**Take Note:** Ammo shortage prevents the Russians from throwing fire lanes with their machineguns. This is easy to miss, so review the definition of Good Order for SW in the index, and A9.22.

**Russian Advantages:** Starting Positions, HIP, sniper.

**Russian Disadvantages:** troop quality, difficult maneuver to perform, ammo shortage

**Comments:** So how can the Russian maximize his strengths and minimize his weaknesses to win this scenario? As usual, the first step should be a careful look at the victory conditions. The Finns must exit more victory points off the south board edge than the Russians to win. So the Russians can win even if neither side exits a unit, or if they exit the same number of points. Since the Russians start off between the Finns and the southern board edge, the Finns will have to get through them to win. That is why I have listed the starting positions as a Russian advantage. I have heard this scenario described as a foot race, and in this case the Russians have a head start. Note that although most Russian squads are restricted to setting up in or between rows V and AA, their HIP units (SSR 4) are not so restricted. Thus, a Russian squad could be set up HIP on the southernmost row (row A), in the hope of simply advancing off the board for an easy 2 victory points. Of course, the HIP capability could also be used to spring a trap on some Finnish units as they make like track stars in the later stages of the game, trying desperately to get as far forward as possible, but unable to avoid a certain chokepoint. The ubiquitous sniper should aid the withdrawal somewhat. Very few scenarios have such a high SAN. It is vitally important for the Russian player to keep a close watch on every roll and not to miss any sniper attacks. (It also shows class, here and always, to point out a SAN result for your opponent when he misses it.) Despite the starting positions, the HIP, and the sniper, the Russians also have some serious disadvantages to contend with in planning their defense and withdrawal. First, their troops are not nearly as good as the Finns in any respect. Ammo shortage chips in, as already mentioned, by preventing the use of fire lanes, which can be frustrating to the Russian player since this kind of terrain is perfect for them. Most important, however, is the difficulty of the maneuver the Russians must perform. The fighting withdrawal requires the Russian player to continually choose new positions for his troops, all the while trying to keep them in good order and put up enough of a forward defense to hold the Finns at arm's length. Difficult, sometimes agonizing, decisions about when to stay and fight and when to keep moving will occur on just about every turn. The wrong choice can turn what was once a good position into a death trap as Finnish troops seal off the exits to a particular pocket, threatening the occupants with death, or worse, (in terms of victory points in this ASL game) capture. The very difficulty of this maneuver is part of the attraction of this scenario.

Let's now go into a little more detail on the Russian setup and plan. I don't intend this to be the definitive setup, but rather some suggestions about things that might be important or worthwhile. Frankly, I don't think I have this scenario figured out well enough to present a perfect defense. Right off the bat, the very first setup decisions are tough. It is tempting to set up a bunch of guys in row AA, concealed, ready to shred the Finns as they cross the street in row BB. Such a forward defense, however, would get overwhelmed, resulting in a lot of dead and captured Russians, and the Finns would cruise to an easy victory. If you don't believe me, try it yourself and see what happens. On the other hand, you don't want to let the Finns cross the street completely unopposed. This is the first difficult decision for the Russians, and I don't claim to know the perfect answer (I only know that some options are *not* the answer). I think one or two squads in row AA, concealed, and also a couple of dummy stacks in row AA, might work to slow the Finns a bit. Keep in mind that these units are likely to be sacrificed, but if you can get them out safely to rearward positions, by all means do so. Using dummies on the front line means that there will be less concealment for real Russian units. Therefore I like to try to set up as many as I can in places where they will be able to gain concealment at game start. This usually means somewhere to the rear of the setup area, say rows V-X. I didn't mention a commissar as a Russian advantage because I look at it as a necessity. I like putting a commissar in V10, where he can gain concealment and be available to rally the squads that will deploy to his front, in such places as Z10, Y10, etc. A nice place for a squad on flank protection might be W1, and a unit in V4 has a decent field of fire down the middle. Note the effect of the blazing building in U6. Not only will it most likely consume T5, T4, and U4 as well, but also it will be blowing drifting smoke out to U9 and later T6-T8. The Russian does not want to get caught defending a line with the smoke providing cover for the Finns to move up adjacent and jump into CC, so when the line falls back from its initial positions, it would seem wise to pull back behind the S4-Q10 road, so that the Finns will have to endure more open ground in order to close with the Russians. Choosing when and how to withdraw will be critical for the Russians. Consider, for example, the area on the west board edge bounded by the Y1-U3-Q1 road. This is decent terrain for a while. But units that stay here too long can be seriously endangered by a Finnish squad with a machinegun in W4, which could throw a fire lane out to P0. There are many places that could be used for the HIP units, so tailor your strategy to suit your play style. Because the MMG is so heavy and suffers from ammo shortage, I like to use it in the HIP role. It might even be important enough to warrant a leader as well, although the scarcity of Russian leaders makes this a difficult decision. Some good places are O1 and O10, perhaps at level 1, because they can dish out some serious firepower at the adjacent chokepoints and help stop a Finnish push along a board edge. The second HIP squad could be used as a goalie in any number of locations, such as B4, B6, D1, H9. Alternatively, it could be used in a more forward location for a more aggressive defense.

**Finnish advantages:** troop quality

**Finnish disadvantages:** scenario pace

**Comments:** The only Finnish advantage in my mind is in troop quality, but what a huge advantage it is. These squads have better firepower and morale than their adversaries, and the same range. They have assault fire and spraying fire. Finns can self rally, deploy without leadership, recombine without leadership, are stealthy (unless Green), and immune to cowering, all of which combine to place them head and shoulders above their Russian counterparts. A big disadvantage for the Finns is the pace of the scenario. The distance from their starting positions to the southern board edge is 28 hexes, so in this 7 turn game they have to average an advance of 4 hexes per turn to exit a unit. Of course, double time, leader bonus, and road bonus can help make up lost time, but still there is no time to dawdle. This serves as an interesting counterpoint to last issue's scenario, The Commissar's House, where the Germans had a much shorter distance to travel in a longer time span and could afford to spend more time shooting. Here in Fighting Withdrawal the Finns will have to do a lot of moving. And that brings with it the risks of those -2 DRM shots the Russians will often be able to pepper them with as they move about in the open streets.

It is usually a bit more difficult for me to say precisely what an attacker should do in a scenario, because so much depends on how the defender sets up, and also the outcome of the first turn or two. Thus I won't try to go into exact hex locations for units, and who will fire at what or move to what hex on turn 1. But there are still some general principles that can be discussed. First of all, I know in many scenarios attackers like to form a *schwerepunkt* with most if not all of their units, and strike along a board edge, which not only gives them local superiority but also flank protection. Although I think some of those principles make sense here, the playing surface is so narrow that it probably is more trouble than it is worth to commit *all* of your units to one board edge. I think you might find it too congested. Rather, a strong attack down one board edge, supported by smaller forces in the middle and opposite edge, might pay bigger dividends. The supporting units can prevent the Russians from reinforcing laterally, allowing the *schwerepunkt* to do its work as designed against a numerically inferior foe. Moreover, it is more likely under such a plan to have most units in positions to fire at the Russians.

This scenario is ideal to practice half squad tactics. Early in the game I would want to probe with half squads, sometimes running them right into suspected Russian positions, double timing if necessary, to force loss of concealment. Other half squads might try to penetrate past the Russian units to get behind them and interfere with their rout paths. Hey, if I'm going to expose a unit to the great danger of -2 DRM shots, I'd rather it were only a half squad, right? Such probes by half squads put the Russian player in a bind. Should he shoot at them while he has that nice -2 DRM? Or would it be better to retain concealment? He'd certainly rather shoot at a juicier target, but if the half squads get behind him, it could easily spell doom for the Russians when they try to rout later on. The ability to self deploy means that the Finnish player can put as many half squads as he wants into play to suit his own play style.

There are a few other general points the Finnish player should keep in mind. There will rarely be good reasons to fire during Prep Fire. Assault Fire is almost as good. Taking prisoners is probably better than invoking No Quarter, because of the high value of any prisoners that you manage to exit with. Lastly, the sleaze tactic of self breaking in order to rout forward could be used to your advantage. (Note the Q&A from the '93a Annual for A10.41). Naturally, the Russian player will want to keep units in positions to prevent a forward rout of broken Finns.

**Summary:** The Russian infantry continually falls back, trying to stay a step ahead of the Finns. The Finns press hard on their heels. This is not a brawl but a game of maneuver.

## AMBUSHED!

**Kirk Woller**

*So let's see, I have a -2 total ambush modifier over my opponent for this possible close combat. If I go in and ambush him, my position will be improved dramatically if I win and can reposition myself. If I don't win the ambush then my position is really weakened, whether or not I even win the subsequent close combat. Should I go in?*

I was recently in a PTO situation like this with Matt and I felt that my skulking days were over as my back was against open terrain. My intuition said go in, and so I did in three different hexes. What were my chances in any one of these combats that I would ambush him? Let's make some quick back-of-the-envelope calculations...

If we break down all of the possible die rolls we can produce a table as follows:

**Table 1**

Total -2 favorable modifier  
Ambusher Die Roll

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1						
2	☒					
3	☒	☒				
4	☒	☒	☒			
5	☒	☒	☒	☒		
6	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	

The top line represents the possible die rolls for the **Ambusher**, while the vertical numbers represent the die roll of the **Ambushee**. The marked boxes are the die roll combinations that result in an ambush.

The total number of possibilities is  $6 * 6 = 36$ , and so we find that ambush occurs 15/36ths of the time, or 41.7% of the time. So even with a -2 total favorable die roll modifier, we notice that there is only about half a chance of an ambush! My position in the game mentioned above had three of these situations, each which really needed to succeed to solidify my position. All three were successful, and the odds that this would happen were  $15/36 * 15/36 \sim 7\%$ !

Using variations on the table above one can determine the chance of success for -1, 0, or other modifiers just as easily and they are summed up here:

(clip and save)

Total Modifier Favoring <b>Ambusher</b>	% Chance of <b>Ambush</b>
-3	58.3
-2	41.7
-1	27.8
0	16.7

Now, what kind of protection does a negative modifier provide against being ambushed? Using Table 1 above and filling in the proper boxes gives us the following:

Total Modifier Favoring <b>Ambushee</b>	% Chance of <b>Ambush</b>
0	16.7
-1	8.3
-2	2.8
-3	0

So we see that a modifier in favor of the **Ambushee** really can make the chance of ambush low, while even fairly large modifiers in favor of the **Ambusher** only bring the chances up to about half, with a total modifier of 0 only giving approximately 17%.

With this quick analysis it should be easier to determine how dangerous it might be to face your opponent's stealthy, concealed unit with a CX, lax unit or any other combination of battle condition modifiers, and perhaps even hone that gut instinct before jumping in and hoping for the best.

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